



PRESENTING YOUR CAREER PORTFOLIO

FACILITATOR GUIDE

SESSION OVERVIEW

This 45 - 60 minute session provides students with strategies and insights for presenting their career portfolio in both electronic and paper formats. Students will demonstrate and evaluate the presentations of portfolios for the purposes of a job interview. Panel presentations will also be discussed. Students will learn that portfolios may be used to support their applications for scholarships, post-secondary entrance and small business loans.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Students will understand the multiple benefits of presenting their portfolios.
2. Students will demonstrate an effective portfolio presentation as part of a job interview, or a panel presentation.
3. Students will prepare to use their portfolios to respond to common presentation questions.
4. Students will use an evaluation tool to assess presentations of portfolios.
5. Students will be aware of paper and electronic formats and appropriate use of these mediums.

MATERIALS

Hand Out 1 – Portfolio Presentation Evaluation Sheet

Hand Out 2 – Presenting Your Career Portfolio: Do and Don't List

Hand Out 3 – Presentation Checklist

Hand Out 4 – Career Portfolios: Different Presentation Formats

Hand Out 5 – E-Portfolios (optional)

Hand Out 6 – Portfolio Presentations For Business Loans (optional)

Note: Students need to bring their career portfolios to class to be used in role-play situations.



PRESENTING YOUR CAREER PORTFOLIO

OVERVIEW AND TIMELINES

Introduction – Purpose of a Portfolio Presentation	10 Minutes
Mock Job Interviews or Red Flags Group Activity	30 Minutes
Wrap Up	5 Minutes

ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION – PURPOSE OF A PORTFOLIO PRESENTATION

Engage class in a brief discussion on the purpose of portfolio presentations. Outline the situations where portfolios may be presented: job interviews, panel presentations, academic entrance and scholarship applications, business loans, and online job applications.

The remainder of the session will focus on the use of the portfolio for the purposes of a job interview. Emphasize the importance of knowing in detail the content and location of important documents within their portfolios. Reinforce the need for students to have their portfolios divided into sections (personal, academic and technical skills, management skills, teamwork / leadership skills, and project examples) as explained in the Developing Your Career Portfolio Pick-Up and Go Kit.

Option #1 - MOCK JOB INTERVIEWS

Ask two or three student volunteers to use their portfolios during a mock job interview. Instruct the students to imagine that they are in an interview for a summer job or an entry-level job in their field of choice. **Encourage the students to refer to specific sections of their portfolios to back up their answers.** The facilitator will play the role of interviewer and will ask several standard interview questions. See Top Up List for Facilitators.



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Top Up List For Facilitators – Common Interview Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Describe your last job.
- Why did you leave your last job?
- What did you like best about your last job?
- What did you dislike about your last job?
- What is your favorite subject at school? What is your least favorite subject?
- What are your three greatest strengths?
- What would you consider to be an area for development?
- Where do you see yourself three years from now? Five years?
- Where have you demonstrated responsibility in your past work?
- Tell me how you feel team sports contributed to your skills?
- Are you involved in any school-related activities that demonstrate your skills?
- Tell me why we should hire you?

Source: Interview Skills Building Pick-Up and Go Kit

Distribute **Portfolio Presentation Evaluation Sheet Hand Out**. Instruct the rest of the class to evaluate each job interview performance. Give the students time to read through the evaluation sheet criteria before the exercise begins so that they know what they are looking for, reminding them that comments should be positive and / or constructive. No negatives!

At the completion of the exercise, ask the class, “What went well and what did not?” Put this information into a “do” and “don’t” list on the whiteboard or a flipchart. Support this by giving students a copy of **Presenting Your Career Portfolio: Do and Don’t List Hand Out** and **Presentation Checklist Hand Out**.

Option #2 - RED FLAGS GROUP ACTIVITY

Recruit student responses regarding inappropriate uses of the career portfolio with respect to job interviews. Examples:

- Dropping off the portfolio and informing the interviewer that they will come back in half an hour to collect the portfolio.
- Handing the interviewer the portfolio and expecting them to search through a large document to find relevant information.
- Bringing the portfolio to the interview and not using it at all!
- Informing the employer on a resume that you have a portfolio and then NOT bringing it with you to the interview!



PRESENTING YOUR CAREER PORTFOLIO

Break students into pairs and ask them to brainstorm answers to the following question: How can I use my portfolio when going for an interview? Instruct the students to imagine that they are in an interview for a summer job or an entry-level job in their field of choice.

After a few minutes, bring the students back into a large group discussion. Document their responses on a white board or black board. Have the students copy down the information for future use.

Distribute **Presenting Your Career Portfolio: Do and Don't List Hand Out**.
Distribute **Presentation Checklist Hand Out**.

Using the Facilitator Top-Up List of Common Interview Questions on the previous page, add any important points that are missed, or challenge students with scenarios to prompt appropriate responses. For example, using your portfolio, how would you respond to the questions, "Are you a team player?" or "Can you work independently?"

WRAP UP

Distribute **Career Portfolios: Different Presentation Formats Hand Out** to emphasize that career portfolios may be presented to support a number of student career options. Remind students that career portfolios are important self-marketing tools.

Distribute **E-Portfolios Hand Out** (optional) and /or **Portfolio Presentations For Business Loans Hand Out** (optional) if appropriate.



Portfolio Presentation Evaluation Sheet

([√] Check off the appropriate box)

	Yes	No
1. The portfolio was organized and professional looking.		
2. The portfolio contained all of the required information - student's resume, skills, work samples, letters of reference, etc.		
3. The student used the portfolio in the interview to respond to questions by providing examples.		
4. The student knew where their information was located in their portfolio without searching.		
5. The student positioned the portfolio so the interviewer could see the information.		
6. The student volunteered other information (such as transferable skills - communication, organization, problem-solving skills, etc.).		
7. The student was well prepared.		
8. The student showed enthusiasm and a sense of accomplishment - e.g. "I am very proud of...."		
9. The student spoke clearly.		
10. The student made good eye contact.		

Comments:

Name of Evaluator: _____



Presenting Your Career Portfolio: Do and Don't List

Do:

1. Know your portfolio well so you can refer to the relevant sections to answer interview questions. Sections and dividers will help keep you organized. Know the placement of your documents...

- Resume
- Biography / Mission statement
- Letter of reference
- Transferable skills
- School transcript
- Best work sample
- Career plan
- Job / Volunteer experience
- Extra curricular activities
- Team work
- Work experience evaluation
- Project work

2. Refer to specific sections in your portfolio to enhance your answer to interview questions.

For example, if asked, "What kind of leadership skills do you have?"

These skills can be demonstrated by showing involvement in team sports, a special project at school or through participation in a community event.

3. Bring copies of your resume, reference letters and other information that may be particularly relevant to the position being applied for so that they can be left with the interviewer.
4. Highlight relevant information or statements in your portfolio (with a highlighter pen) that you want the interviewer to read or notice, especially when there is a lot of information on one page.
5. Position your portfolio in a manner so that you, and the person interviewing you, can read it.

Don't:

1. Don't expect the person, or persons, interviewing you to read your entire portfolio. Most employers do not have the time.
2. Don't leave your portfolio with the interviewer. If they want to look over certain pages offer to copy them and drop them off, or have them copied before you leave.
3. Don't set the portfolio on the interview table expecting the employer to take the initiative to look at it.
4. Don't downplay your achievements; potential employers need to see the skills and accomplishments you have! Avoid statements like, "This is JUST a picture..." or "I ONLY did this ..."



Presentation Checklist

Dress well – Wear appropriate dress clothes. For males: dress pants, pressed shirt and possibly a tie and jacket if available / appropriate. For females: dress pants or skirt (appropriate length) and conservative top/blouse (covering midriff). Shirts/blouses for males and females should be plain without any “slogans” or pictures.

Be confident – Be proud of your accomplishments and skills. When talking, avoid phrases like “This is just...”

Market yourself – Convince them that you are what they are looking for. A confident interview will show them that you are the best person for the job.

Use props where appropriate (e.g. portfolio presentations for Career Prep or school, or an interview where the use of props relates to the job) – This can be as subtle as playing background music that you have produced or as bold as doing a multimedia presentation of your portfolio in demonstrating your media skills.

Body language – Again, show confidence. Maintaining appropriate eye contact is important. Don’t fold your arms. Use the interviewer’s name when addressing him / her. Have an open stance and good posture. Move, stand, etc. as a natural part of your presentation. Body language says as much as the words you are saying.

Show! – Be prepared to do an impromptu presentation on a particular area of strength if you feel comfortable with it and if it is appropriate at the time.

Portfolio – When presenting your portfolio, position it in such a way that it is visible to all panel members. You may well be standing in front of the panel, paging through your portfolio as you are talking.

Know your Portfolio well!



Career Portfolios: Different Presentation Formats

	Job Interview	Panel* Presentation	Business Loan	Online Portfolios
Who Takes the Lead?	The interviewer will most likely take the lead, with the interviewee responding to questions using the portfolio as support/proof of answers given.	The presenter will take the lead, showing highlights of the portfolio with the panel in more of a listening role.	The presenter will take the lead, showing only key business information.	The presenter takes the lead, as the audience is unknown.
Order of Presentation	The interviewee will most likely flip back and forth through the portfolio in response to the various questions asked by the interviewer.	The presenter should present the material in a well thought-out, organized fashion; going through the four sections of the portfolio from start to finish.	The presenter should present only information that is directly relevant to the acquisition of a business loan, emphasizing business knowledge and related skills.	Information on the website should be presented in the same order and in the same sections as in their paper portfolio.
Material to be Included	The interviewee should "tab/flag" the material that they feel is pertinent to the job they are applying for OR take in only those pages that are appropriate in a separate binder.	All the material should be included in the portfolio, although the presenter should highlight only key aspects.	The material selected should directly support the business plan such as transferable skills, business knowledge and completion of directly related courses.	Do NOT include any information containing personal information such as home address, grades, references, etc.
Copies of Portfolio Information	The interviewee should have extra copies of documents that will most likely be requested by the interviewer, such as resume, cover letter, references, school grades, etc.	Copies of your resume should be available for distribution at the time of the presentation. No other copies of the portfolio should be required in advance, but can be made available if requested.	The presenter should have extra copies of documents that will most likely be requested by the loans officer, such as resume, cover letter, references, school grades, and a business plan.	No copies are required as the format is electronic. Update information on a regular basis.

*Panel Presentation refers to a formal presentation where the student presents his/her portfolio to a group of people, such as for the Career Prep Credential or to a scholarship committee.



E-Portfolios

One of the best ways to establish an electronic (online) portfolio is to create a website. This website should have a menu to the different parts of the portfolio, as well as links to different sites. An example would be a link to a 4H site, or other sites that refer to activities that you were involved in. If you are mentioned on your school's website, a link to this would also be appropriate. Many job applications are now online, so you could use your website link as part of your application or link your E-Portfolio on your resume. Sometimes resumes are sent as attachments, so use your web link in your covering letter. Electronic portfolios and resumes can be built using Career Cruising (www.careercruising.com). As effective as E-Portfolios can be, every student should have a hard copy portfolio.

Do:

1. Update your portfolio regularly. If a reader observes that some information is out of date, they may make assumptions about the rest of the material. An example would be if you already graduated, don't have 'Future graduation date is....'
2. Keep this portfolio professional. Too much decoration can be distracting.
3. Use a menu for the different sections of your portfolio. This makes it handy for you or the interviewer when looking for something specific.
4. Do include an email address as a point of contact. When giving an email address, make sure it has an appropriate / acceptable name.

Don't:

1. Do not include your age, personal home address or phone number. Some of this information may be required on your online application, but this information is usually not volunteered until requested during a successful interview. As a student, for some jobs, your age may be required in accordance with employment standards.
2. Names and addresses of your references should not be included. On paper applications, you can fill this in if required, as this process is usually secure.

TIP: Students should use a web server that they can keep for many years. Example: If students developed portfolio documents and stored them in the school's web folders, it would be wise to upload them onto their parent's web space folders. (Once a student graduates, the school would be deleting that student's documents from their folders.) To pursue this route, students will need to have access to resources for developing a web site, as well as gaining access to the Web.



Portfolio Presentations: For Business Loans

Some students will require financial assistance from a bank or lending institution to start up a business or to provide funding for post-secondary schooling. Portfolios can be used to enhance a required business plan by demonstrating knowledge, competency, skills, and reliability.

Do:

1. Use your portfolio to demonstrate your ability to be organized.
2. Make sure you include in your portfolio your mission statement, your resume, proven experience in other business or community activities, and any money management training such as high school courses in Financial Management.
3. Students should tab with a marker, those activities, school grades and certificates in their portfolio that relate to business suitability.
4. Identify your “transferable skills” that relate to the business you are hoping to establish.
5. Show that you have an understanding of financial management.
6. Give examples of your involvement in the development and completion of a project.
7. Have copies of pertinent documents (resume, letters of reference, business experience, etc.) so the loans officer does not have to copy them or rely on their notes while you speak.

Don't:

1. Don't bring your entire portfolio to the meeting with the loans officer as the bank is only interested in those portions of your portfolio relating to business.
2. Don't leave your portfolio with the loans officer, as they will not have time to read it all.
3. Don't copy too much information from your portfolio. Limit the amount to 3-4 pages. Too much information downplays the effectiveness of the important documents.
4. Don't just show up at a bank expecting to meet with someone. Phone ahead and arrange for a meeting.

Tip: For first time applicants, don't just drop off the information at the front desk. Make sure you have a good face-to-face interview. Be prepared and be concise.